

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

June 21, 2011

Called for 6:30 PM in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue,

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Harding, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Nolan, Ms. Tauber, Ms. Turkel,
Mayor Maher

Mayor Maher in the Chair.

The Chair explained that the late start of the meeting is due to the elementary school graduations.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:47 PM.

1. Public Comment

The following individuals were heard:

- Bertha Pantosa, Chestnut Street, re Amigos
- Mary White, Harvey Street, re CRLS Crew
- Mike Arnott, Harvey Street, re CRLS Crew
- Helen Gibbons, Third Street, re CRLS Crew
- David Quigley, Fenno Street, re the Superintendent's evaluation
- Hela Bryant, Columbia Street, re letter from Like Minded Parents
- Michele Sprengnether, Chilton Street, Controlled Choice

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. McGovern, it was voted to suspend the 3 minute rule to allow Ms. Sprengnether to finish her statement.

- Joel Nogil, Clifton Street, re Controlled Choice
- Chris Colbath-Hess, CTA President re the Superintendent's evaluation
- Richard Harding, Windsor Street, Agenda items #194 and #196

On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted to close public comment.

2. Student School Committee Report: None

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the May 24, 2011 Special Meeting as presented.

4. Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meetings: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar

Mr. Fantini spoke to C11-130 saying that the meeting referenced in his motion has been held; therefore, he moved, seconded by Mr. McGovern, to remove from the Calendar and place on file **C11-130, motion by Mr. Fantini** that the Superintendent meet with the Athletic Director and Crew Coach to develop a multi-year plan replacement of equipment.

The Chair recognized Councillor E. Denise Simmons and her guest Mr. Townes.

Ms. Turkel removed from the Calendar **C11-087, Minutes of the March 15, 2011 Regular Meeting** and asked that the corrected Minutes be accepted as presented. On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Mr. McGovern, the Minutes were accepted as corrected.

6. Superintendent's Report/Presentations/Consent Agenda

The Superintendent walked Members through the Innovation Agenda Update (copy on file in the School Committee Office):

Planning Teams:

- Citywide School Advisory Group
- Innovation Agenda Teacher Planning Team
- Out-of-School-Time Partners
- ELA/Social Studies/Humanities Forums
- Innovation Agenda Cabinet Meetings with Upper School Campus Principals

Upper School Program Design:

- Upper School Schedule
- ELA/Social Studies/Humanities Programming
- Curriculum Feedback from the Community
- Upper School Campuses Serving Grades 6-8
- Intensive Studies Program

Evaluation Timeline & Tasks Overview

Teacher Assignment

Professional Development for Upper School Teachers

Upper School Accountability

Budget and Facilities:

- Estimated Staffing and Upper School Budget
- Facilities Budget and Schedule

Implementation Benchmarks

The Superintendent responded to the following questions and comments:

- There is a need for more communication to the public
- Consider ways to get information to the public
- Would like to have the Innovation Agenda on the School Committee's Agenda every meeting to allow the public to speak to it

The Superintendent asked for clarification re putting the Innovation Agenda on every Regular Meeting Agenda. His plan is to have an end of the year update. He doesn't mind if the Innovation Agenda is on the School Committee Agenda for every Regular Meeting to allow public comment; however, he will not present a report each time.

- What is going to happen during the summer re the Innovation Agenda; is there a plan in place
- Concern that some teachers believe that their input is not being taken seriously

Dr. Young asked Members refer to him teachers that have negative feelings about his availability. He assured the Committee that his door is always open and he is amenable to discussion at any time.

Ms. Turkel moved, seconded by Ms. Tauber, that the Innovation Agenda be available for public comment and discussion at all Regular Meetings by placing it on the School Committee's Agenda. The motion was adopted.

Ms. Turkel moved that the Committee have two meetings during the summer. One that focuses on the Innovation Agenda to discuss what information is needed from the Superintendent and what information the Committee expects the Superintendent to bring forward as policy votes. Also, what the School Committee's role is or is not in moving the Innovation Agenda forward. The Committee should hold a separate and distinct summer planning meeting to discuss short term goals of the Controlled Choice plan and the long term vision on how to move forward on Controlled Choice. Mr. Fantini referred Ms. Turkel's motion to New Business. Ms. Turkel accepted Mr. Fantini's referral.

- People want to be included, even those who were against the plan
- Parents should have input on, not write, on the curriculum
- Keep goals and deadlines realistic
- There is concern about upper school accountability
- People like to know their correspondence has been received
- Communication is vital
- This is a lot of work; it's okay to ask for help when it's needed
- Do not want a summer meeting just to discuss communication
- Must find a solution to communication problem
- Consider professional resources to help with the problem
- Clarify what is going to be consistent among the upper school campuses and what is going to be individual

The Superintendent would like the Committee to be very clear in what it wants. Does he make the decisions or should that be done by the teachers? He is trying to negotiate competing interests. This is an on-going process. Expressing an idea does not mean that it will happen; it's just part of the process in decision-making. He will not make decisions based on the volume of e-mail received. The standards have to be similar. Standards will be driven by the students' needs not by the adults' preferences.

- Clearly define curriculum feedback

Mr. McGovern in the Chair.

- Some parents feel that the ISP evaluation is a waste of time if the program is going to be discontinued
- People feel that they have had a good experience with ISP
- There is nothing in the document that addresses best practices

Best practices surveys have been distributed to principals of each school principal. The surveys are to be returned in September. The intent is to look at the program to see how it is best serving students, as well as learning of any improvements that can be made in the current structure. Focus groups are forthcoming.

- Parents are very interested in being involved in keeping ISP program
- The characteristics of the two schools (Peabody and Kennedy-Longfellow) are very different
- It is unfair to look at a program and not look at the recruitment patterns
- We have never done a good job in explaining to low-income families that this is a program they might need
- The recruitment bias is very important to consider in what the programs look like
- What is the role of the ISP in the community
- We should plan to talk to alumni students and parents
- The ISP is not being allowed to be what it once was
- Can we talk to teachers who taught in the ISP program
- Would like backup and clarity on grade structure

Governance should be made clear; what the Superintendent decides and what the School Committee decides. Dr. Young would like the Members to review the Innovation Agenda and note what each one feels is policy level. Every curriculum decision should not become a series of debates; there needs to be momentum in moving forward.

- It's important to keep ISP with the Innovation Agenda
- A decision needs to be made soon about the future of ISP
- If the program is kept, how can it be incorporated in the Innovation Agenda
- Would like to separate leaders in each school
- Need more information about the Wrap-Around Zone
- Need more detail on evaluations and special education in the middle schools
- Change is difficult
- Need to do a better job for low income families
- Feel that the Superintendent is doing well in taking CPSD from good to great
- Need to be more transparent that certain kids are not being served well
- Educational decisions should be left to the Superintendent
- Parents need and want to be heard

7. School Committee Agenda (Policy Matters/Notifications/Requests for Information):

Consent Agenda:

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted to bring forward items #11-93 - #11-99. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted that #11-100 Supplemental be taken up at this time. Discussion took place around the order of the hearing the Agenda items. The Chair suggested that in the interest of time, the items should be heard in the order as they appear on the Agenda.

The following was referred to a second reading: **#11-91, Approval of Revisions to Non-Discrimination Policy & Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment:** that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Non-Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment for the Cambridge Public Schools as detailed in the document (first reading).

On a roll call vote, the following items were adopted:

#11-92, Grant Award: that the School Committee accept and approve the following grant award in the amount and for the period indicated; the District's application is pending approval by MA DESE later in June:

Expanded Learning Time Summer Grant, in the amount of \$39,784.00, for the period July 1, 2011 to August 31, 2011, Project/Grant SC12892.

Description: This grant has been applied for and CPS is awaiting notification from the MA DESE. If awarded, the grant will support a five-week summer program at the Fletcher Maynard Academy that will include both core academics and enrichment opportunities for students in grades K-4.

CPS Target Population: Between 75-100 Fletcher Maynard Academy students in grades K-4.

Outcomes and Measures of Effectiveness: Students will benefit from on-going instruction in the core subjects as well as the enrichment opportunities and will continue to make academic progress over the summer, a time when they can lose ground if not productively engaged.

#11-100, Contract Award: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for 2011 Summer Literacy Camp, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Cambridge Housing Authority, 674 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, for the period July 2011 and August 2011, in the amount of \$30,000.00.

Superintendent's Evaluation:

Mr. Harding:

- ✓ Shows leadership
- ✓ He has the biggest voice in student achievement
- ✓ Not afraid of change
- ✓ Make sure that teachers and principals understand that they will be held accountable for student success
- ✓ Need to define the best way to communicate to the community
- ✓ There will be anxiety in moving forward with the Innovation Agenda
- ✓ If the information is not there, someone will create it
- ✓ There are big challenges re teachers' contract
- ✓ Great job in being accessible
- ✓ Very flexible in making people confident that you will listen to them
- ✓ Be forceful about decisions you have to make
- ✓ I feel confident that you have the ability to move us forward in the right direction
- ✓ Looking forward to working with you to making the Innovation Agenda work

Ms. Tauber:

- ✓ Congratulations on the development of the Innovation Agenda and in the day to day running of the school system
- ✓ You have a lot of community support
- ✓ Many of your goals are on the way to being accomplished
- ✓ Continue to visit schools and attend events
- ✓ Commend you for the amount of time you spend with the community
- ✓ Recommend that you work on the principals' evaluation
- ✓ Next budget cycle will be difficult
- ✓ Would like to see regular updates on the Innovation Agenda
- ✓ Appreciate your reaching out to the community
- ✓ Explain the criteria for best practices
- ✓ Very accommodating to the School Committee Members
- ✓ Would like to see calendar for the upcoming school year

Ms. Nolan:

- ✓ Need to focus on achievement in the goals
- ✓ Continue to monitor the SPED review to ensure recommendations are fulfilled
- ✓ There is too much focus on certain schools
- ✓ Need to be consistent in range of schools that are not performing
- ✓ Make sure the analyses are thorough
- ✓ Congratulate you and your team on the budget management
- ✓ There is a better sense of how the money is spent
- ✓ Personnel management a mixed record; the morale issues need to be addressed quickly
- ✓ Communication is important
- ✓ You are an amazing public speaker
- ✓ PR group did not do its job; let's not hire PR group again
- ✓ Respond to the email from the community in a more timely fashion
- ✓ We are lucky to have you

Mr. Fantini:

- ✓ Impressed with your relationship with your leadership team
- ✓ You have a tremendous team
- ✓ New principals need a lot of work
- ✓ Teachers contract is a powerful document
- ✓ Don't feel we are data driven system

- ✓ Should not be dismissive about the MCAS
- ✓ Thank you for wanting to take our system from good to great
- ✓ You are the curriculum leader and the education leader

Ms. Turkel:

- ✓ You listened to our suggestions re follow through
- ✓ Strategy change is good
- ✓ Commend you on getting the Innovation Agenda passed
- ✓ We need you to follow through and to lead us through your vision
- ✓ This is not the time to change leadership in our district
- ✓ Trust that you will consider our input to help you do your job
- ✓ Would like to see a response to the SPED review
- ✓ We need to know what your priorities are
- ✓ Appropriate for you to say what you consider a priority and what can wait
- ✓ It's unrealistic to try to do everything at once

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to extend the meeting to 10:45 PM.

- ✓ We need you to continue; I want you to continue
- ✓ Charge you to move ahead and bring everyone along with you
- ✓ Your positive relationship with the CTA President and the Union is highly valued

Mayor Maher:

- ✓ Applaud your solid leadership
- ✓ Your willingness to go out into the community has given people access to you
- ✓ This is the time we need to communicate
- ✓ Concerned about the angst from the school community
- ✓ Need expert to get information out to the public
- ✓ Devise plan during the summer to help you keep the public informed
- ✓ We have to take control of the information that goes out
- ✓ Extraordinary job! Support extension of contract
- ✓ Good leadership helps us move forward

Mr. McGovern:

- ✓ Great leadership
- ✓ Kudos to your team
- ✓ There are many complex issues for you
- ✓ Involvement in the community is a real strength
- ✓ Good job balancing and listening to public concerns
- ✓ You are accessible
- ✓ As a committee we need to look at how we support you and how we hold you accountable
- ✓ Not our job to make your job more difficult
- ✓ Thank you for your service; feel that you will strive to make suggested improvements

Ms. Tauber moved, seconded by Mr. Harding, that the School Committee authorize and request the Mayor, as the Chair of the School Committee, to send a letter to Superintendent Young prior to July 6, 2011 notifying him, in accordance with the provisions of Article 2(B) of the 2009-2012 employment agreement between the Cambridge Public Schools and Superintendent Jeffrey M. Young, that the School Committee intends to renew the employment agreement and to initiate negotiations with him for a successor contract. On the following roll call the motion was adopted: Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Mr. McGovern YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Tauber YEA; Ms. Turkel YEA, Mayor Maher YEA.

Mr. Fantini moved, seconded by Ms. Tauber, for suspension of the Rules for the purpose of moving reconsideration of the foregoing vote. The Rules having been suspended, a motion to reconsider the foregoing vote, hoping the same would not prevail, failed of adoption.

On a motion by Ms. Tauber, seconded by Ms. Nolan it was voted that the School Committee authorizes the hire of outside counsel to represent it in negotiations for a successor contract with Superintendent Young. On the following roll call vote, the motion was adopted: Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Mr. McGovern YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Tauber YEA; Ms. Turkel YEA, Mayor Maher YEA.

Mr. Harding asked for an update on the negotiations with the Superintendent. Ms. Tauber was heard.

Dr. Young was heard. He appreciates the time and effort put into the evaluation process. He takes to heart the School Committee's advice and he will continue to always do better in his job. The Superintendent thanked the Committee for its vote of confidence to continue. It is a pleasure to work with all staff; a special acknowledgement went to CTA President, Chris Colbath-Hess for her collaboration in moving ahead.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted to bring forward #11-93-#11-99.

#11-93, Joint motion by Mr. McGovern and Ms. Turkel that the Superintendent work with the City's Human Service Department to ensure that Amigos students, starting in September of 2012, will have access to Community Schools programming in the Upton Street building, as all other Cambridge Public Schools' elementary students have in the buildings in which they attend school. On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to refer the item to the Superintendent:

#11-94 Joint, motion by Mr. McGovern, Ms. Nolan and Ms. Turkel that the Superintendent update the Committee about the Controlled Choice policy as it relates to language immersion programs and schools. Mr. Maloney was heard. On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Ms. Turkel, the item was placed on file.

On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to extend the meeting to 11:00 PM.

#11-95, Joint motion by Mr. Harding and Ms. Nolan that in light of the vote to prematurely dissolve the Controlled Choice Team which was the only team to have volunteers serving who were not part of the City or School District, that the School Committee formally thank the members of the team: Harvard Dean Laura Fisher, Cambridge NAACP President Kathy Reddick, Cambridge NAACP Education Chair Ruby Pierce, Boston University School of Education representative Brenton Stewart, community members Liz Hill, Michele Sprengnether and MaryAnn Matyas, Cambridge Chamber of Commerce representative Lois Brunet, Cambridge Teacher's Association President Chris Colbath-Hess, as well as CPS members Principal Robin Harris, COO Jim Maloney, and Family Liaison representative Claire Koen. Further that the School Committee develop a plan for ensuring that the continuation of the team's work plan which was voted as part of the Innovation Agenda, and the motion referred to the team be addressed in a timely manner. Ms. Nolan placed the item on the Calendar.

#11-96, Joint motion by Mr. Harding and Ms. Nolan that the Superintendent ensure that summer assignments for all schools are clearly communicated, that students and families understand the importance of completing work assigned and that work is reviewed upon return to school. Ms. Nolan would like to ensure that there are follow-ups for summer assignments. The Superintendent was heard in support of the motion. Ms. Turkel offered a friendly amendment to exclude elementary schools from the motion. Ms. Nolan and Mr. Harding declined the amendment. On a 6-1 vote the motion was adopted.

#11-97, Motion by Mr. Harding that the School Department's Legal Counsel define the procedure for amending the Innovation Agenda as it was voted on March 15, 2011. Further, that Legal Counsel investigate the legality of Mr. Fantini's motion adopted at a Special Meeting on June 14, 2011: that given the vote of the Innovation Agenda has taken place, the Facilities Team, JK-8 Educational Team, Controlled Choice Team, and Coordinating Team created for the purposes of facilitating our discussions be dissolved. Further, that Legal Counsel report back to the Committee on the above matters by the Summer meeting (date to be determined). Mr. Harding was heard in support of his motion. He would like the matter referred to Legal Counsel. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, the item was referred to Legal Counsel.

#11-98, Motion by Mr. Harding that the Rules of the School Committee be amended to allow Members to be heard alphabetically, rotating from meeting to meeting, on issues under discussion. Discussion took place around the motion. Ms. Tauber offered a friendly amendment that it be referred to the Governance Sub-Committee. Ms. Turkel was heard in support of Ms. Tauber's friendly amendment. Mr. Harding asked for a roll call vote. On the following roll call, it was voted to refer the item to the Governance Sub-Committee: Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding NAY; Mr. McGovern NAY; Ms. Nolan NAY; Ms. Tauber YEA, Ms. Turkel YEA; Mayor Maher YEA.

On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to extend the meeting to 11:20 PM.

#11-99, Letter from members of the Steering Committee, Like-Minded Parents, Cambridge. Dr. Young was heard. He has met with Ms. Bryant and he will continue to meet with her to discuss the issues presented in the letter. #11-99 was referred to the Superintendent.

8. Non-Consent Agenda

9. Resolutions

10. Announcements

11. Late Orders:

On a motion by Mr. Harding, and the entire Committee, it was voted that a letter of condolence be sent to the family of Joe Sousa, long time CPS teacher, who recently passed away.

On a motion by Ms. Tauber, seconded by Mayor Maher, it was voted that the new School Committee student representatives, Naomi Tsegaye and Grant Baker, be invited to the summer meeting to observe procedures and that they meet with the Governance Subcommittee for orientation.

On a motion by Ms. Turkel, seconded by Ms. Tauber, it was voted That the Mayor work with the Vice Chair and the Superintendent to set up a scheduled summer meeting to allow the School Committee to plan for next year, to deal in depth with Controlled Choice, and to deal in depth with issues involved with the Innovation Agenda, and that be a series of meetings, not a single meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by the entire Committee, it was voted that the Cambridge School Committee send a letter of condolence to the family of Assistant Special Education Teacher, Paul DiGiovanni of Arlington, who passed away suddenly on June 17, 2011.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to extend the meeting to 11:45 PM.

The Chair read the call for Executive Session. On the following roll call it was voted to continue the meeting in Executive Session: Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Mr. McGovern; YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Tauber YEA; Ms. Turkel YEA; Mayor Maher YEA. The Chair announced that no votes will be taken in Executive Session with the exception of a vote to adjourn; the Committee will not reconvene in Open Session.

Executive Session

Members present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Harding, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Nolan, Ms. Tauber, Ms. Turkel, Mayor Maher.

Mayor Maher in the Chair.

Also present: Jeff Young, Superintendent
Dr. Carolyn Turk
Maureen MacFarlane, Legal Counsel
James Maloney, Chief Operating Officer

Barbara Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources

Attorney MacFarlane updated the Members on the strategy for impact bargaining. Ms. MacFarlane discussed the issues of concern, and responded to Members' questions.

On a motion by Mr. McGovern, seconded by Ms. Nolan, the meeting was adjourned at 11:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted
Patricia A. Berry
Acting Executive Secretary to the School Committee